


CARON  
CR  
- Z215

3 1761 11973337 6

# Administration

DEPOSITORY LIBRARY MATERIAL

Notes for  
community leaders



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2023 with funding from  
University of Toronto

<https://archive.org/details/31761119733376>

# What is administration?

---

In simple terms, the administration of a community organization may be thought of as the direction, control and management of the policies that have been accepted by the members.

The administration of the most successful voluntary groups is flexible and dynamic because people participating in the work of community organizations are constantly growing and developing. As the members' needs and purposes change, the administration of the organization should be updated.

Whether the group is big or small, it needs direction and supervision to carry out its work. Some of the operations usually included in this process are:

- deciding what the organization is trying to do
- outlining a course of action
- selecting the people to do the jobs
- assigning duties and giving the necessary authority
- training members and staff
- conducting programs
- bringing together human and material resources
- interpreting the work of the organization
- improving the methods of operation
- maintaining adequate records and reports
- budgeting
- assessing progress and evaluating methods.

For good administration, the best thinking and the efforts of many members working together is necessary. No single member of an organization can hope to know, or be expected to know, all that is required to make the organization operate effectively. However, it is necessary to centralize authority and to define responsibilities. If several people take for granted that they have the final say in any situation, the result is bound to be confusion and chaos.

---

What are the factors through which an organization makes an effective contribution to its members and to the life of the community? How are they related?

*Purposes* The goal of the group is its reason for existence. Both long and short-term goals are needed so that policies, procedures and programs can be planned.

*Policies* These are the rules which guide the intentions of the group and direct the work of each and every member.

*Procedures* These are the regular methods of carrying out the work. They are based on policies and turn policies into action.

*Programs* These are visible products of the administrative process. It is only through well-conceived programs that the organization can advance toward its goals.

*Planning* This is the all-important lubricant by means of which all the above are developed and put into action. By reducing friction, planning allows the power of the organization to be transmitted into action.

## **Principles of administration**

- ☐ People carry out plans best when they have been involved at some stage in the planning.
- ☐ People develop loyalty to an organization and its purposes when they are treated like people, not machines.
- ☐ People react to dictatorial leadership with hostility and lose interest in the goals.
- ☐ People work better when there is a way for them to let their leaders know what they think and feel.
- ☐ People want to feel they are important and that they have something to contribute.
- ☐ People like to feel that they really belong to an organization.
- ☐ Inefficiency and apathy are often the results of poor human relations in the administrative process.
- ☐ Often workers can offer better solutions than the boss because they have better knowledge of the problems of the job.



- 
- ☐ Results are better when we work with people rather than dictate to them.

## **Administrative tools**

An uneven distribution of work among the leaders and members results from a weak administration. Confusion and apathy set in when the administration fails to relate purposes and procedures to policies and programs.

Like any other job, administration is easier with good tools. Here are some of the most important ones.

☐ *Card file of members* Cards should show names, addresses and telephone numbers of members, their abilities and limitations, interests and outside activities. In an organization with a large membership, keeping up the file may represent a big job for the secretary or the membership committee.

☐ *List of regular duties* Each job should be described fully. The description should include the qualifications it requires and the amount of time needed to do it. When a member is delegated to take over a job, he or she should know what the job entails, why it is important, how this job is related to the work of other people, and the purposes of the organization, and to whom he or she is responsible.

☐ *Scheme for regular rotation of duties* Every organization has joe jobs as well as positions of responsibility. When most of the members are actively involved in the work of the organization, no individual need be overloaded or burdened for a long period with a boring but necessary task.

☐ *Group assessment and evaluation* More is accomplished when each person is able to see how the jobs are going. Regular evaluation sessions will help to dissipate confusion and eliminate waste effort. They can also be an important source of encouragement.

---

☐ *Handling correspondence* Letters should be acknowledged at once and handled in such a way that they come to the attention of the appropriate officer at the right time.

☐ *Statements of policies and purposes* Some groups operate under a constitution that sets out basic purposes, firm policies and procedures. Others have a more flexible arrangement and may change and grow with the community, members and their needs. In either case, the purposes and policies in effect should be recorded in a form easily referred to, and they should be available at every meeting. They should be reviewed at regular intervals by all the members.

☐ *Well-planned agendas* There are many ways of preparing an effective agenda. Some groups use a system of consulting the members about agenda items before the meeting is convened—while it is in the planning stage. In others, the president, the committee chairman, or some executive group prepares the agenda without consulting the members directly.

☐ *Unfinished business* An important adjunct to agenda-building for regular meetings is the list of unfinished business that is kept up-to-date by every efficient secretary. This is a running list to which items are added as they arise. The list shows the date on which each item is to be considered. When the item has been dealt with, it is crossed off. In this way questions that have been postponed are never lost sight of.

☐ *Minute books* Minutes of meetings ought to be accurate records of the discussions, decisions and activities of the group. A permanent file of the minutes, with marginal references, should be kept. The opening paragraph should give the name of the organization (committee or sub-group), kind of meeting (regular, special or adjourned), purpose, date, time and place of the meeting.

Another paragraph should give the names of those present and the chairperson. The reading and approval of the previous meeting's minutes should be recorded.

The exact wording of each motion and amendment, together with the names of the movers and seconders, and the outcome of the voting, should be entered.

---

A permanent note-book should be kept and the text should be either written in ink or typed. The pages should have wide margins on the left side to allow for corrections and additions. The book should be loose leaf. Each sheet should be signed by the secretary and the presiding officer.

☐ *Financial records* An account of receipts and disbursements, a budget and an annual financial statement are the main financial records and reports in most community organizations.

☐ *Budget* The budget is the financial plan for proposed services, and must be related to the purposes of the organization.

It is developed on the basis of past expenditures. It should be self-explanatory to all members. The financial statement is a report of the actual services performed in terms of dollars and cents. It must be related to the budget. All concerned should be involved in making and approving the budget and should be kept informed of the actual expenditures.

☐ *Reports* Both oral and written reports, produced systematically, will help keep the members informed about the progress made and the action recommended. They should be accurate, reliable, simple and to the point. They should tell of actual work done, comment on the value of the work, suggest improved methods and recommend action. Comparisons of figures are helpful, but all statistics need interpretation and should be presented graphically where possible. Reports should be used to interpret the work of the organization, evaluate progress and to find the strength and weakness of the group. Comprehensive reports, prepared annually or seasonally are often useful.

☐ *Newsletter or bulletin* An organization with a large or scattered membership needs a regular news service to keep the members in touch with each other and up-to-date about the activities.



# Constitution and bylaws

---

Traditionally, the administrative pattern established by the members of a voluntary organization is set out in the constitution and bylaws.

However, many successful organizations have never accepted a constitution. They operate by means of motions and resolutions. The minutes of the organization incorporate the rules of procedure that have been accepted, and these rules can be changed by a majority vote at any time.

Other community groups find it is wise to meet together for a considerable length of time before finally drafting a constitution. Temporary officers conduct the business of the organization during this probationary period. After six months or a year of working together, the members are in a better position to discuss and decide upon the methods and principles within which they will act as an organized group.

## **Constitution**

The constitution usually states what matters should remain unchanged during the life of the organization, how the constitution may be amended and the procedure for enacting and amending bylaws. The other articles of the constitution usually set out:

- name of the organization
- purposes, aims and objectives
- membership
- executive offices
- standing committees
- terms of office for executive officers and committees.

The name of the organization should be as short and meaningful as possible if it is to be recognized and remembered by the public. It is not necessary to explain the whole purpose of the organization in the name. For example, Iceville Skating Club is a better name than The Iceville Club for the Teaching and Promotion of Figure-skating.



---

The purposes, aims and objectives article is one that should have the most careful thought. Organizations have been known to define their aims so narrowly that action is impossible. Others have purposes stated so vaguely that it is difficult to use them as the basis for meaningful programs or to recognize the progress the group makes toward achieving them.

A group set up to study existing facilities in the community will have no purpose once its study is complete. A group that proposes to promote Christian education will sooner or later find itself facing the problem of deciding what is meant by Christian education.

The membership article should contain a clear statement of who is eligible for membership along with descriptions of the various types of members, such as regular, associate or honorary.

The executive offices article usually states what officers the members will elect and what the responsibilities of each will be.

The standing committees are also often described in the constitution—what committees there should be, their responsibilities, perhaps how many members each committee should have, and how the chairpersons and members should be appointed.

Terms of office for the executive and possibly the committee chairpersons and members should be clearly indicated in an article of the constitution—when the term begins, the duration and the conclusion.

## **Bylaws**

Bylaws are decisions related to matters of procedure that are expected to change from time to time during the life of the organization. They usually require previous notice and a two-thirds majority to amend. They are appended to the constitution and form part of it as long as they are in force. Bylaws in most community organizations deal with these items:

— date of annual meeting

- 
- methods of nomination and election
  - fees
  - order of business
  - quorum
  - notice of motion
  - appointment of auditors.

Date of the annual meeting at which the election of officers takes place, and at which the year's work is reported, is usually set in a bylaw. Most organizations describe the meeting as taking place between certain dates, so that no combination of unexpected events, Sundays and holidays will cause difficulties.

Methods of nomination and election should be established in another bylaw. If a nominating committee is to be used, the article should state clearly how it is to be appointed and the method of reporting. Usually this bylaw also points out that nominations in addition to those of the committee are in order. The method of election should be carefully outlined, including any decision as to the plurality necessary to elect.

The time of regular meetings is usually established in a bylaw; for example, 8 o'clock in the evening of the first and third Mondays of the month. The circumstances under which special meetings may be called might also be described in this bylaw. The calling of special meetings might be included with the responsibilities of executive officers in the constitution.

A quorum bylaw is used by some societies but it is often found to be a handicap. Most organizations prefer to conduct their business through the people who are interested enough to attend. If a quorum is declared in a bylaw, it should be low enough to be practical.

---

Order of business is another matter recorded in a bylaw by some organized groups because, for some reason, they wish to establish a standard order for all their meetings. The sequence of the items of business recorded in such a bylaw should be given careful thought. See the *Effective Meetings* booklet.

Membership fees, dates on which they are due, the amounts and any penalty for non-payment, should be clearly stated in a bylaw.

A notice of motion bylaw is used to establish the advance notice in writing that must be given of any motion that proposes a new bylaw, amendment of an existing bylaw, or amendment of the constitution.

Appointment of auditors is a matter that may be included in the constitution (under the responsibilities of the appropriate standing committee) or it may be established in a bylaw.

Once a constitution and bylaws have been established, the terms should be kept available for reference at all times.

All points of order that concern these documents should be settled by the presiding officer's reading out the relevant sections.



# Committees and how they work

---

Most of the work of voluntary organizations in our communities gets done by teams of people working in committees. Some organizations have a great many committees—sometimes too many, so that some are more traditional than active and functional. But nearly all need standing committees to look after the main divisions of the job, such as administration, finance, membership, program planning, and publicity.

Other short-term committees are often set up from time to time to look after special projects, or to make studies and surveys.

If a committee has a big assignment, the chairperson may feel he or she needs a big team, but a committee can be too big. Small committees can arrange to meet frequently, and are usually more active and responsible. Perhaps the best solution is an expandable committee—a small permanent group that takes in extra temporary members when it has jobs for them.

The small committee can consider and deliberate more efficiently, and it can face difficult and touchy problems more frankly than a large group. A small group can also become well informed more easily and quickly. See the *Effective Meetings* booklet.

The chairperson of an important committee should be a skillful discussion leader. He or she need not be an expert in the field, but needs to have enough experience to guide the committee's work, to help the group to find the information it needs, and to look objectively at the facts.

The best committee members are people who have time to do a good job, and are enthusiastic enough to be willing to work hard. No one should be invited to act on a committee on the basis that there is not much to it or it won't take a lot of time. Each member should know what is expected and how much time will be needed on the job.

It is in committee work that the community organization's potential leaders are developed, and they develop most steadily and quickly when they carry their full share of responsibility.

---

Most committees are made up of both experienced and inexperienced members. But no committee should carry free riders who are going along just for the experience.

Any committee finds it hard to produce results if it does not know exactly what its job is and exactly when it should be finished. Many organizations make a point of instructing their committee chairperson in writing, defining precisely what the committee is to do and when its report, project, study or program is to be produced. The chairperson, or the committee as a whole, can then lay out a plan for working out the assignment. They can set deadlines for the completion of each part of the job, and, as they go along, set out precise assignments for each member of the committee.

If a committee bogs down in talk, or flounders into ill-considered action, it may be the fault of an inefficient organizational structure. The correlation of the work of all committees of an organization is usually the job of the executive group. More often than not the officers are ex-officio members of the working committees, and attend meetings as often as they can. Another useful way to help the executive group co-ordinate the work of all the committees is to have the committee chairpersons attend certain regular meetings of the executive.

The records a committee keeps of its work are an important part of its method. The members should all help the recorder by summarizing the group's discussions from time to time.

The minutes of the committee's meetings will provide the chairperson with the background for the presentation of reports. Minutes keep before the committee members a clear view of how much of their job they have completed and what still remains to be done. A standing committee particularly, because it has a continuous job to do, needs clear, concise minutes and schedules of assignments.

---

When the chairperson presents an interim or final report of the work of the committee, it should be a short, factual and clear-cut statement giving the name of the committee, the names of the members, the dates and times of meetings, an outline of the job the committee was to do, and its recommendations.

In the presentation, the chairperson may also give some facts about how the committee reached its conclusions, but the written report itself should contain only the essential facts.

Reports of committees form part of the organization's permanent record and should be filed by the secretary. The records of a standing committee also constitute an important part of the means by which continuity is insured when a new group of members take over from a retiring group.

If the chairperson always does all the jobs, the committee members will not do any; they will be blocked by their leader. See the *Leaders and members* booklet.



# Forms and check lists

---

Almost every kind of business needs forms to carry on efficiently. Well-designed forms help us to have the right information available at the right time.

Some organizations operating broad service programs might need a large number of forms for requisitioning material, purchasing, financial records, check lists for planning, and reports of many kinds.

The items of information required on a form should be stated briefly and in a logical sequence. Adequate space must be allowed if the completed form is to be clear and easy to refer to. When people are asked to fill out forms they should be able to understand why the information is needed. No unnecessary items should be asked for.

From time to time forms get out of date and ought to be revised so that they make sense to the people who use them, and so that they always form an accurate record of the practices of the organization.

Here are examples of simple forms that might be used in conducting the meetings of a community organization.

---

## A formal motion blank

Name of organization	
I move that .....	
.....	
Date .....	Moved by .....
	Seconded by .....
Carried	<input type="checkbox"/>
Defeated	<input type="checkbox"/>

The use of motion blanks will help in accurately recording the motion and in speeding up the process of reaching decisions.

Each member of the group may be provided with blanks. The motion is written down and the form is signed by the person making the motion and by the seconder. It is either read from the floor or passed to the chairperson. The chairperson may read it to the members and then pass it to the secretary for recording. The blanks may be recorded immediately or numbered in sequence and recorded in the minutes later.

---

## Instruction form for committees

Name of organization .....

Date of assignment .....

Committee's name .....

Specific purpose .....

.....

Assignment .....

Time of reporting .....

Size of committee .....

Composition .....

.....

.....

Chairperson .....

This instruction form will confirm in writing the setting up of a committee and inform the chairperson of the specific duties of the committee. The sheets should be made out in duplicate by the appointing body. A copy is sent to the committee chairperson. The other copy is kept by the appointing body and the item should be placed in the agenda for the date indicated for reporting.



## Check list for arranging a meeting

A check list similar to the one below will ensure that all details are looked after. By means of it the chairperson of the program committee keeps a record of details, and who is responsible for each. Later the sheets may be used to form the basis of reports or filed with the minutes of the meeting.

### Check list

For meeting of ..... Chairperson .....

### Details

#### Check when arranged

- ☐ Date set .....
- ☐ Place arranged .....
- ☐ Time: Begin ..... Stop .....
- ☐ Purpose of meeting .....
- ☐ General subject .....
- ☐ Agenda completed .....
- ☐ Publicity: before .....  
after .....

### Special arrangements

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Speaker .....   | Film .....  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted .....                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Booked .....             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Topic .....                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Projector and screen ... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Travel & lodging .....                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Operator .....           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Time allotted .....                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Seating .....            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reception .....                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Lighting .....           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction .....                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction .....       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgment .....                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Follow-up .....          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thank you note .....                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Time allotted .....      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Program (Social, displays, etc.) |   |
| List details .....  |   |
| .....   |   |

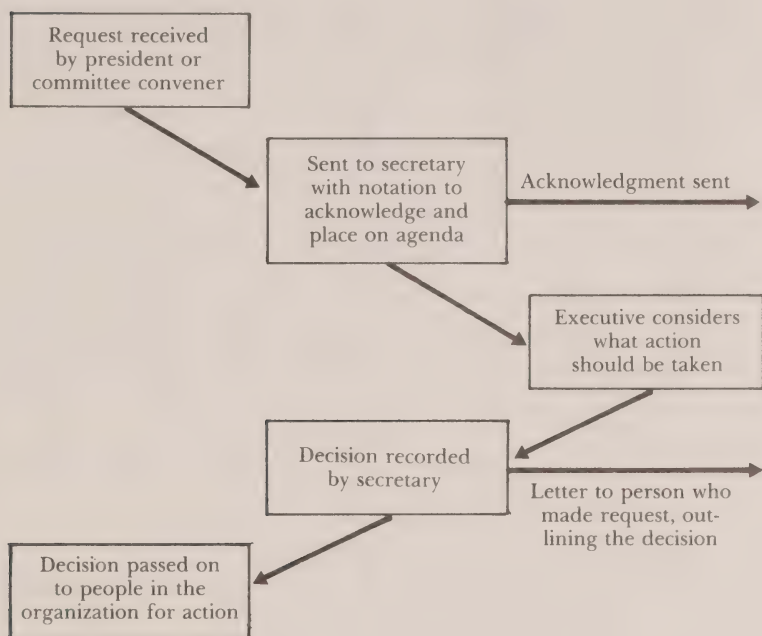
List agenda and approximate timetable on other side.

# Flow charts

---

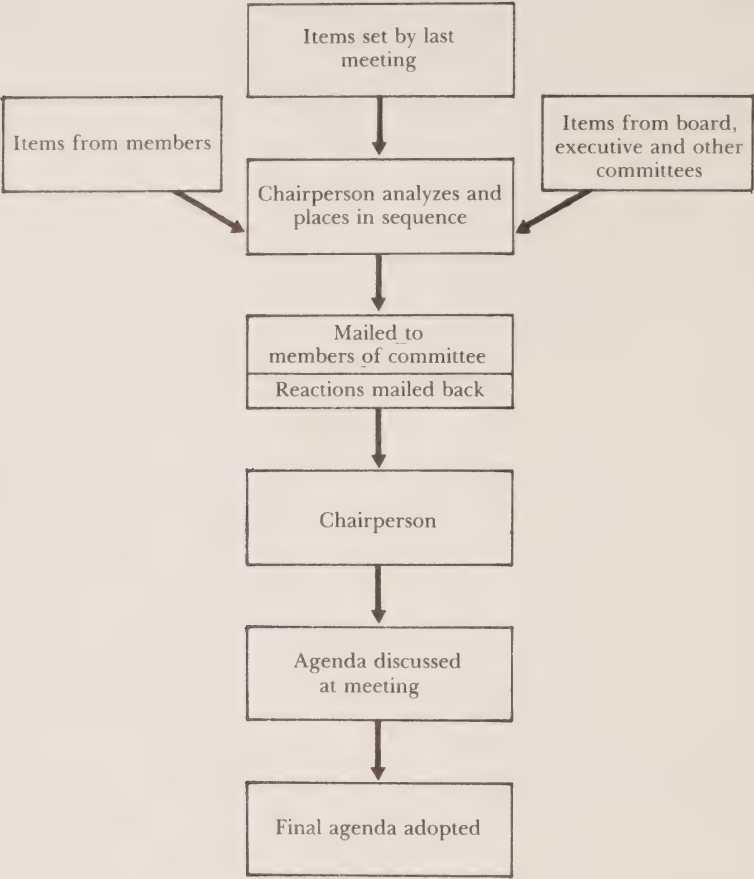
The administrative patterns shown in the *Community Organizations* booklet are really flow charts. Such charts may also be used to illustrate a particular line of procedure, to analyze business routines or to interpret the relationship between two or more persons or groups.

## Handling a request



---

# Preparation of agenda





# Further reading

---

Beckhard, Richard, *Organization development: Strategies and Models*, Reading, Mass., Addison-Wesley, 1969

Berne, Eric. *The structure and dynamics of organizations and groups*, New York, Grove Press, 1966

Fisher, J. *How to manage a non-profit organization*, Toronto, Management and Fund Raising Centre, 1978.

Fulmer, Robert M. *Managing associations for the 1980's*, Washington Foundation of the American Society of Association Executives, 1972

Gordon, T. *Group centered leadership*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1955

Houle, C. O. *The effective board*, New York, Association Press, 1960

MacBride, M. *Step by Step: Management of the volunteer program in agencies*. Bergen County, New Jersey, Volunteer Bureau of Bergen County, 1979

McConkey, D. *MBO for nonprofit organizations*, New York, AMACOM, 1975

O'Connell, B. *Effective leadership in voluntary organizations: How to make the greatest use of citizen service and influence*, Chicago, Association Press, 1976

Richards, A. *Managing volunteers for results*, Boulder, Colorado, Volunteer National Centre for Citizen Involvement, 1978

Roodman, Herman S. *Management by communication*, Toronto, Methuen, 1973

Wilson, M. *Effective management of volunteer programs*, San Diego, Boulder, Colorado, Volunteer Management Services, 1976

---

*Other titles in the series are:*

The community

Community conferences and seminars

Community organizations

Effective meetings

Evaluation

Leaders and members

Program planning

Publicity and public relations

Speaking in public

Teaching adults





Ontario Ministry  
of Culture and  
Recreation

Citizenship  
Division

Hon. Reuben C. Baetz  
Minister  
Douglas Wright  
Deputy Minister

Leadership program  
5th Floor, 77 Bloor St. W.  
Toronto, Ontario, M7A 2R9  
Telephone: 965-7505

D774 6/80 3M

ISBN 0 7743 4948 4